

US newspaper circulation drops 8.74 percent

April 26 2010, by Chris Lefkow



An "out of order" sign is posted in a USA Today newspaper rack in San Francisco, California. Circulation figures for US newspapers released Monday provided another dose of bad news for an industry that has seen a wave of bankruptcies, closures and cutbacks in newsrooms across the country.

Circulation figures for US newspapers released Monday provided another dose of bad news for an industry that has seen a wave of bankruptcies, closures and cutbacks in newsrooms across the country.

Average daily US newspaper circulation declined 8.74 percent during the six months ending on March 31 compared with the same period a year ago, the Audit Bureau of Circulations said.

Average Sunday circulation fell 6.54 percent during the October-March period, the bureau said.

The latest ABC figures come as US newspapers grapple with declining

print [advertising revenue](#), eroding circulation and the migration of readers to free news on the Web.

A slight consolation: the 8.74 percent decline in average daily circulation for 602 newspapers reporting figures for October-March was not as steep as the 10.62 percent drop in the previous period.

Of the top 25 US daily newspapers, The [Wall Street Journal](#) was the only one reporting a Monday to Friday circulation gain in the latest reporting period.

The Wall Street Journal, which launched a New York edition on Monday in a bid to challenge The New York Times on its home turf, saw its circulation rise 0.5 percent in the period to 2.09 million.

The Journal is one of the few US papers to charge readers online and Web subscriptions are counted in its circulation figures.

Average circulation at USA Today, the second-largest US newspaper, declined 13.58 percent to 1.83 million while The New York Times saw its circulation fall 8.47 percent to 951,063.

The [Los Angeles Times](#), owned by the bankrupt Tribune Co, shed 14.74 percent to 616,606 while The [Washington Post](#) was down 13.06 percent to 578,482.

The New York Daily News saw its circulation decline 11.25 percent to 535,059 while its rival, Rupert Murdoch's [New York Post](#), shed 5.94 percent to 525,004.

The [Chicago Tribune](#), another Tribune Co. newspaper, lost 9.79 percent to 452,145 while the Houston Chronicle slipped 13.77 percent to 366,578.

Other newspapers in the top 25 posting double-digit circulation declines were the Chicago Sun-Times, down 13.88 percent to 268,803, the Dallas Morning News, which dropped 21.47 percent to 260,659, and the Detroit Free Press, which lost 13.31 percent to 252,017.

The San Francisco Chronicle shed 22.68 percent to 241,330 and New Jersey's Newark Star-Ledger was down 17.79 percent to 236,017.

Bucking the trend were several smaller newspapers including the Naples Daily News of Florida, whose circulation was up 21.76 percent to 77,565, the Toledo Blade of Ohio which gained 6.30 percent to 117,704 and Pennsylvania daily the Allentown Morning Call, which was up 4.77 percent to 103,845.

John Sturm, president and chief executive of the Newspaper Association of America, said the latest ABC figures "should come as no surprise" but do "not tell the whole story about the vitality of the newspaper industry."

"Nearly 100 million adults continue to read a print newspaper every day and 168 million adults read a newspaper in print or online in the past week," Sturm said in a statement.

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